

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 14526 041615Z

46/10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 AID-05 OMB-01 NEAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE IMMEDIATE 1999

INFO USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

AMSBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 14526

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORR CLAS CONF VICE LOU)

SUBJECT: SINO-INDIAN BORDER CLASH

REF:

NEW DELHI 14525

1. NEW DELHI PRESS NOV 2 FOR MOST PART CARRIES IDENTICAL VERSIONS OF OCT 20 INCIDENT BASED ON MEA PRESS SPOKESMAN'S REMARKS AFTERNOON OF NOV 1 AND ALMOST ALL PAPERS CARRY SAME LEAD: "CHINESE KILL FOUR INDIAN SOLDIERS IN AMBUSH". ONLY ADDITIONAL INFO IS IN THE STATESMAN WHICH IDENTIFIES THE INCIDENT AS OCCURRING IN NORTHEAST FRONTIER AREA (NEFA) AND OBSERVES INCIDENT WAS MOST SERIOUS ALONG THE BORDER SINCE 1967. STORY CITES INFO RECEIVED IN DELHI TO EFFECT THAT BORDER HAS BEEN QUIET SINCE THE INCIDENT AND NO UNUSUAL MILITARY ACTIVITY OR ARMS BUILDUP HAS BEEN NOTICED (IMPLICITLY ON THE CHINESE SIDE ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT MADE EXPLICIT). OFFICIAL SOURCES ARE DESCRIBED AS UNWILLING TO "JUMP TO HASTY CONCLUSIONS" ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INCIDENT.

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2. THE GOVT'S SPOKESMAN IS REPORTED AS HAVING INDICATED THAT THE

DEAD INDIAN SOLDIERS WERE RETURNED TO INDIAN CUSTODY BY THE CHINESE AFTER EXCHANGES THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. SEVERAL PAPERS REFER TO STATEMENTS FROM CHINESE SOURCES ABOUT THE INCIDENT IN WHICH IT IS ALLEGEDLY SAID THAT AN INDIAN PATROL HAD INTRUDED INTO CHINESE TERRITORY AND ATTACKED CHINESE POSITIONS. OFFICIAL INDIAN SOURCES ARE SAID TO STRONGLY DENY THIS.

3. PRO-COMMUNIST "PATRIOT" NOTES IN ITS STORY ON THE INCIDENT THAT OCT 20 WAS THE DAY SECY KISSINGER BEGAN TALKS WITH TENG HSIAO-PING AND ALLEGES "OBSERVERS" SAW THIS AS NO ACCIDENT.

4. TEXT OF OFFICIAL GOI STATEMENT ON INCIDENT IS AS FOLLOWS:
" ON THE 20TH OCTOBER 1975, AN INDIAN PATROL PARTY CONSISTING OF ONE NCO AND FIVE MEN, WHILE ON A ROUTINE PATROL ALONG INDIA'S NORTHERN BORDER, WERE AMBUSHED BY A CHINESE PARTY OF ABOUT 40 PERSONS. THE AMBUSH WAS WELL WITHIN INDIAN TERRITORY AND IN AN AREA WHICH HAS BEEN REGULARLY PATROLLED BY US FOR MANY YEARS AND WHERE NO PREVIOUS INCIDENT HAD TAKEN PLACE.

FOLLOWING THIS INCIDENT, FOUR MEN WERE MISSING AND IT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY LEARNED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS THAT THEY HAD BEEN KILLED. THEIR BODIES HAVE SINCE BEEN RETURNED.

"THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA HAVE TAKEN A VERY SERIOUS VIEW OF THIS INCIDENT AND HAVE LODGED A STRONG PROTEST WITH THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AGAINST THE UNPROVOKED AND UNJUSTIFIED FIRING ON THE INDIAN PERSONNEL WHO WERE ON ROUTINE DUTIES WITHIN THE INDIAN SIDE OF THE BORDER AND AGAINST THE DELIBERATE KILLING OF THE INDIAN PERSONNEL PERFORMING THEIR ROUTINE DUTY."

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANY REPORTS OF CHINESE PRESS OR RADIO COMMENT ON THE INCIDENT AS ALLEGED ABOVE (PARA 2). WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION DEPT OR CONGEN HONG KONG MAY HAVE.
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